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Public Affairs, Roger Williams University

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# Inaugural Poet Richard Blanco to Share His Works at RWU on April 15

Public invited to free President's Distinguished Speakers Series event with acclaimed Cuban-American poet Richard Blanco



March 30, 2014 | Public Affairs Staff

**BRISTOL, R.I.** – Upon reading “[One Today](#)” for the millions of attendees and viewers at the second Presidential Inauguration of Barack Obama in 2013, [acclaimed poet Richard Blanco](#) created a movement that inspired the country to think differently about how poetry can create a new understanding of our communities and our selves.

On Tuesday, April 15, members of the public are invited to enjoy an evening of poetry with Blanco as part of the [President's Distinguished Speakers Series](#).

A prolific writer, Richard Blanco's poetry explores the intersections of his identity as a Cuban-American and openly gay poet and engineer whose journey has taken him from the shores of Miami to the foothills of rural Maine to the White House, where he became the youngest and the first Latino, immigrant and gay writer in U.S. history to serve as an inaugural poet. The evening of poetry will share Blanco's journey across physical and personal landscapes as he shares selected works with the University community.

"We are pleased to welcome Richard Blanco to Roger Williams University – a powerful speaker who has made a tremendous impact in connecting communities through his poetry," says RWU President Donald J. Farish. "His poem at President Obama's inauguration was a rich and beautiful depiction of one man's realization of the American Dream, and we look forward to having such a uniquely talented and creative spirit speak to our campus community."

Richard Blanco is one of the most influential poets and storytellers writing today. He was raised and educated in Miami, earning a B.S. in civil engineering and M.F.A. in creative writing from Florida International University. Blanco has been a practicing engineer, writer and poet since 1991. He has traveled extensively in his adult life, living and working throughout Europe and South America. He has taught at Georgetown University, American University, The Writer's Center and Central Connecticut State University.

The April 15 presentation will take place in the School of Law Appellate Courtroom 283 on the University's Bristol campus at 10 Metacom Avenue. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the event will begin at 7:30 p.m. A book signing will follow the presentation. The event is free and open to the public; no tickets are required. For more information, call (401) 254-3154.

Launched in 2011, the President's Distinguished Speakers Series at Roger Williams University invites thought leaders from a wide range of disciplines to share perspectives, inspire conversations and enrich the intellectual lives of students, faculty and staff at Roger Williams as well as members of the local community. As part of the series, each guest is invited to devote much of the daylong visit to direct engagement with students in classroom sessions, offering RWU students unique opportunities for one-on-one interactions with some of the world's leading authors, scholars, artists and public servants.